

FACT SHEET



**South 4th Street Site
Clear Lake, Iowa**

February 2000

INTRODUCTION

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has received results from sampling conducted in the area of South 4th Street in Clear Lake, Iowa. In November 1999, EPA collected soil, ground water, and storm sewer and sediment samples to identify the source and the extent of perchloroethylene (PCE) contamination found in the ground water.

SITE BACKGROUND

PCE was found in the ground water in November 1998 during an environmental assessment conducted for the Clear Lake Bakery. In March 1999, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) sampled ground water from a monitoring well located on the west side of the bakery garage and found PCE present. IDNR referred the site to EPA later in 1999.

PCE, also known as tetrachloroethylene or perc, is a chlorinated hydrocarbon solvent commonly used by dry cleaners and as an industrial solvent.

SAMPLE RESULTS

The highest levels of PCE found in shallow ground water (12,000 parts per billion (ppb)), and in soil (1,500 ppb), were found in samples taken near the Cottage Cleaners building. Lower levels of PCE were also found in ground water samples taken on the north side of 1st Avenue South between South 3rd and South 4th Streets. The maximum contaminant level (MCL) of PCE that EPA allows in public drinking water is 5 ppb.

The shallow ground water, found at a depth of 15 feet, appears to flow southwest toward Clear Lake. Although a municipal well is located several blocks southwest of where the PCE was found, the municipal well is in a different water-bearing zone at a depth of 150 feet. In November 1999, EPA sampled this municipal well and two other municipal wells. No PCE was found in the municipal wells.

Some people who drink water containing PCE at levels greater than the MCL over many years could have problems with their liver and may have an increased risk of getting cancer. Although the municipal water supply is safe, there may be private wells located in the contaminated area. If

you have a well in this area (see map), please contact EPA at the phone number listed below.

EPA is preparing a report evaluating the data collected at the site. This report is expected to be completed in March 2000. EPA will use information from the report to determine what actions, if any, are necessary to address the contamination.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you have questions about this fact sheet or need additional information regarding this site, please contact:

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